

A statement from Bishop Michael Bird concerning the recent legal proceedings involving Rev. Eleanor Clitheroe-Bell.

We are extremely pleased to have Ellie as part of our faith community. She has always been very open and forthcoming to the Bishops she has served under and my concern at this time is for her work in ministry in the Diocese of Niagara and for the parish community that she serves.

We also understand that the legal matters have been very costly for her and her family, and we do not begrudge her right to seek a peaceful resolution and compensation through the justice system. She has the right to do so, just like all Canadians, and we respect that.

Ellie's legal issues date back several years, to a time before she was ordained and joined our Diocese as a priest. Naturally, she will want to see those matters concluded, and as we are all aware legal matters can sometimes drag on for many years.

Ellie worked for over twenty-five years in the private and public sector and received pension compensation for her work. She consistently took her pension with her as she moved from being a lawyer and banker, to deputy minister and then a CEO.

These pension matters have no impact on her compensation for her part time work in the Diocese. She does not currently receive and has not received a pension from Hydro One or the government. She has indicated to me that she hopes that she will receive a pension when she is 65, and that she wishes to use it wisely, in Christian stewardship in support of her family, the community and her church.